

## QUEANBEYAN AGE COLUMN 12 SEPTEMBER 2008

**A big weekend!** – This is certainly a big weekend for the Region – one that will herald change as befits the new season.

**Local Government Elections** - Queanbeyan will elect a new Mayor for the first time since 1991. We wish outgoing Mayor Frank Pangallo MBE well with his future activities and salute him for his extraordinary contribution to the City as Councillor and Mayor for the past decades.

Cr. Pangallo was the longest serving Mayor of Queanbeyan and the first from a non anglo-celtic background.

Queanbeyan Business Council invited all five Mayoral candidates to address an open meeting on 5 August. What we heard on that night left us in no doubt that, whoever wins tomorrow, we will have another passionate advocate for our City.

Voting is compulsory for all enrolled electors in New South Wales, but you can only vote in the local council area or ward in which you are enrolled.

Queanbeyan local government area polling booths are located at Queanbeyan and Karabar High Schools, Queanbeyan, Queanbeyan West, Queanbeyan East and Jerrabomberra Public Schools, 2<sup>nd</sup> Queanbeyan Scout Hall, Letchworth Neighbourhood Centre and Queanbeyan Conference Centre.

Queanbeyan Business Council looks forward to a very positive relationship with the new City Council.

**Floriade starts tomorrow** – The region's biggest tourism festival is on again. It will draw literally thousands of visitors from all over Australia and internationally, many of whom will choose to stay in Queanbeyan.

The reasons that so many do stay here are well documented:

- Queanbeyan is very convenient to Floriade and other regional attractions
- Accommodation, dining and other facilities are of a good standard and represent excellent value.
- The City has a 'familiar' country town feel.
- We are known for being a friendly bunch!

Let us make sure we greet our visitors and treat them the way we would like to be treated if we were visiting them. If they look lost, then send them to the VIC where we can look after them.

When Floriade finishes, then our own *Queanbeyan in Bloom* Festival will be about to start!

**The DFO has its first weekend** – Fyshwick's new Direct Factory Outlets (DFO) brings challenges and opportunities to Queanbeyan. With 100 or so shops, the Centre will certainly change the dynamics of shopping in the Region. Many Canberra and Queanbeyan people will be having a look-see this weekend. We are bound to see a number of friendly Queanbeyan faces working there.

Whether this new facility will have a major impact on Queanbeyan retail is yet to be seen. Our residents are, by and large, very loyal. Provided we can rise to the challenge by providing excellent and courteous service, this loyalty can be maintained. It is worth noting that the Airport's Brand Depot does not appear to have had a significant impact on our retailers.

Our second challenge is to encourage Canberra people to make the extra short journey into Queanbeyan. If we can do this, then maybe we can all benefit.